

LITERATURE.

THE ENGLISH MAGAZINES.

One of the London weekly Journals for May, contains the following critical remarks on the leading periodical magazines, published in Great Britain—Except what is said of "the Old Monthly," (the observations on which are somewhat hypercritical, and unmerited.) The writer seems to have delinuated the characters of these vehicles of amusement, scandal and frivolity, with a tolerably candid pen.

Blackwood's Magazine—Though the first upon our list is by no means the most eminent in quality. It has long been declining; the personalities and abuse in which it used to indulge, have disgusted and fatigued most persons, and as it has no other strength, it may be considered as *hors de combat*. Scurillity soon comes to an end, cuffs and contempt have put an end to the chief attraction of this magazine.

Turpiter obtineat, sublato jure norendi.

In the present number there is a clever Spanish tale; sketches of Scottish characters may be good in Scotland, but they are not so here. Col. Stewart's sketches of the Highland Regiments is well reviewed; *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, No. II. are more stupid and abusive, if possible, than No. I. If the ale of Mr. Ambrose has no better effect upon Mr. North, he had better change his beverage. We think a diet of bread and water, with the wholesome discipline of a house of correction would mend his morals and his manners. The other articles are of lead itself.

The London Magazine, is Blackwood's formidable rival. Too honest to essay the same dirty paths, and with too much talent to need the assistance of slander, it proceeds to improve. Its chief fault is an attempt at wit. Janus Weathercock, who always wishes to be smart, misses his mark often; he is a slender critic in matters of taste, and as a joker, still less happy. We like him nevertheless. Gratitude obliges us to be civil to a gentleman who labours so earnestly to make us laugh. But Elia is enough to reconcile us to greater impertinencies than even Mr. Weathercock. His Essay in praise of Chimney Sweepers, is delightful. The scene is Bartholemew Fair, where his humorous friend Jim White regales the sooty rogues with fried sausages, is a fine piece of sustained burlesque. There is also a life of Patrick Henry, the orator of Virginia; it is a powerful piece of writing, but if it were not for displaying our ignorance, (a thing not to be named among Editors) we should frankly confess that we had never heard of the wonders there related of the effect of his oratory; that we recollected his name but slightly. Mr. Martin's Pictures have, as they deserve, a decent share of castigation. A spirited War Song by Mr. Montgomery, and a milk and water effusion to a Cowslip, by John Clare, may serve to shew the difference between good and bad poetry, even of the middling kind. Don Giovanni the 18th, in ridicule of the Moncrieff style of play-writing, is worse than Moncrieff himself. A paper on Jan de la Perouse is clever.

The New Monthly, contains a continuation of Mr. Campbell's Lectures on Poe-

try. It comprises the oracular, lyric, elegiac styles. It is to be regretted that a magazine which has the advantage of this gentleman's important assistance, is not better supported in the inferior departments. Grimm's Ghost is below contempt. Mr. P.'s Journey to London is, if possible, worse; both are pert and rapid. The article on the selections from the old Spanish poetry, is however, worthy its place in Mr. Campbell's company. Similar praise is due to an article on the Emperor Frederick the Second and his Minister, Petro delle Vigne.—The Campaigns of a Cornet are dull; the paper on lips and kissing, inexcusably stupid, the subject ought to have inspired the writer. This delightful month of May is the subject of another essay, but we cannot praise it. Hazlitt's Table talk is about Burleigh House and the pictures in it, and things in general; it is vulgar but amusing, such as men of genius, but slender acquirements, (of which description is Mr. H.) usually vent by the hour when they are more than half drunk.

The Old Monthly, is precisely such an affair as you may have seen, in an old family common-place book in the country, where directions for the rearing of poultry are found on the same page with an extract from Wilkes's seditious trash, and following that, a Pastoral, by a Lady; and then a description of a new invented roasting-jack. Just of such materials is this collection composed.—Then is Radical stuff by "Common Sense," and Southey is called a rymester; the latter instance of good taste is enough, we think. The Magazine is however, unfit for London; a very amusing compilation for the country, and if the Editor would let politics alone, his miscellany would be the best old woman's Magazine in the world.

The Brighton wants force; it is loyal, and conducted in a proper gentlemanly style, but it is deficient in energy; there are some clever papers, and among others—one of the Italian Pantomimes. Industry and spirit might make this better.

The European, which has long been very bad promises to be better in future. It is announced to be in different hands, and certainly some improvement is already visible. We shall wait.

FRENCH JOURNALS.

PARIS, May 29, 1822.

For want of something more interesting a few words on the principal Journals of Paris may, I hope, prove not unacceptable. They are, of course, divided into the same compartments as the Chamber of Deputies, viz:—1. the *extreme Droite*, consisting of MM. Marcellus, Donadieu, De Bourville and others, who, it is said, aim at re-establishing the parliament of Paris, annihilating the Charter, and returning to the Government of Louis XV. Next to this division sits M. Laisne and his partisans, M. de Mezey, &c.; this is the *centre Droite*. Next follows the *centre Gauche*, containing, in the first rank, MM. Ternoux, Delessert, Royer-Collart, Beugnot, &c.; and to make up this discordant quartetto, there is the *extreme Gauche*, composed of MM. Lafayette, B. Constant, Chauvelin and others, too well known to need particularizing. The Quotidienne is the official organ of the *extreme Droite*; no article appears in it without having been approved of by a council of Ultras of the very deepest dye. The Drapeau Blanc is the Thersites of this party. It is chiefly edited by a worthless fellow (*ungarnement*) named Martainville, who, in 1793, wrote laudatory articles upon the *Sainte Guillotine*. The Gazette de France is less Ultra and more Ministerial than the Quotidienne. It enjoys a pension from M. Metternich. It sometimes bears away the palm of absurdity and dulness from the Journal de Paris, which is in the interest of M. de Cazes, and may, be termed Journal de la Bascule, that to-day lauds the constitutional regime, and to-morrow loudly calls

for a coup d'etat. One of the heroes of this paper is M. Terneaux. The Constitutionnel is the paper which has the greatest number of subscribers (from 16 to 18 thousand,) and is the best got up journal in Paris. There is no article allowed to appear in it until after being submitted to, and sanctioned by a *conseil* of Libereaux. M. Etienne, a deputy, is one of the principal Editors.—M. Chevassat, the proprietor, purchased it some years ago for 40,000 francs—it now returns him a hundred thousand francs a year. Its literary expenses do not exceed much above a hundred thousand francs. It pays high for foreign intelligence, and has consequently, the best of any French journal. Its literary articles are weak and stupid. The only respectable rival the Constitutionnel has is the Journal des Debats, a hypocritical paper, edited by three Jesuits. It is, in general, in the service of the *centre Droite*. From time to time, M. Chateaubriant—who is a great friend of the printer, Le Normand, who lends him money, inserts some articles (*centre Gauche*) in it. It is this circumstance which leads some good natured people to suppose that Mr. Chateaubriant (who for eight months back has been on the point of becoming Minister) would be less unreasonable and dangerous than M. Peyronnet; they say, "there is at least one good thing in M. Chateaubriant, he is not altogether an orthodox believer." The Journal des Debats was the only literary Journal during the Imperial Regime.—The amusing and cynical Abbe Geoffroy, by his articles in it, raised the amount of its subscriptions to five hundred thousand francs a year. In those articles, he endeavoured to prove, four times a week, with great animation and piquancy, that Voltaire was a sot. One of its best writers at present is Mr. Dessaulx, the only man who defends with any kind of talent the three unities. His articles on literature and music are in general inferior to those of the other Journals. The Courier Francais is the bragadocio of the Liberal party, as the Drapeau Blanc is of the Ultra party. It inserts articles that the Constitutionnel would not dare to do, for fear of losing its subscribers. In this paper there are at times some very excellent articles upon literature. Mr. Jouy, ex-reducteur of the Minerve, is the editor of the Courier. The Miroir is a journal full of wit and point, but so perfectly local and Parisian, that it is unintelligible at St. Denis, which is but two leagues from Paris. Its strength consists in line-spun epigrams and almost impalpable allusions, which so much annoyed the Ultras, that M. Bonald had a law passed, particularly directed against the Miroir. The superannuated Madame de Genlis edits a periodical libel called La Foudre (the thunderbolt, pretty much in the same style as the Beacon of Edinburgh. In one of its numbers, M. de la Fayette was designated as a *forcait libere* (a pardoned galley slave.) Some persons in power pay the amount of 250 subscriptions to this Foudre. There is an evening paper, the Etoile, of nearly the same force and character as the last mentioned paper. It is only read when there is an expectation of some late news in the day, or for the debates when the Chamber is sitting; the Ministers pay it 6000 francs per month. There is also the Pilote, a Liberal paper, but of very confined circulation.